

Message Text

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22-11

ACTION NEA-07

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5741

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 0033

LIMDIS

DEPT PASS AMBASSADOR MURPHY NEA/ARN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UNSC, SY

SUBJ: PRESIDENT'S POLITICAL ADVISOR DISCUSSES JAN 12 SC DEBATE

1. SUMMARY. IN CONVERSATION WITH NADAV SAFRAN JAN 5, PRESIDENT'S POLITICAL ADVISOR DAOUDI STATED THAT SYRIA INTENDED TAKE CONSTRUCTIVE APPROACH AT JAN 12 UNSC DEBATE, AIMED AT HAVING PALESTINIAN RIGHTS RECOGNIZED AND ACHIEVING PLO ENTRY TO PEACE PROCESS. END SUMMARY.

2. VISITING HARVARD PROFESSOR, NADAV SAFRAN GAVE US FOLLOWING ACCOUNT OF HIS CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT ASAD'S POLITICAL ADVISOR ADIB DAOUDI JAN 5. SAFRAN HAD PUT IN TO DAOUDI THAT THERE WERE TWO SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT REGARDING SYRIAN INTENTIONS TOWARD JAN 12 SC DEBATE. ACCORDING TO ONE, SYRIA WOULD SEEK TO
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PLAY CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE OF TRYING TO ESTABLISH PLO

AS PARTY TO SETTLEMENT PROCESS IN COOPERATION WITH U.S. AND WITHOUT DESTROYING EXISTING PEACE FRAMEWORK; ACCORDING TO THE OTHER, SYRIA WOULD SEEK TO EMBARRASS AND ISOLATE U.S. AND EGYPT BY PUSHING EXTREME RESOLUTION MAKING U.S. AND EGYPT BY PUSHING EXTREME RESOLUTION MAKING U.S. VETO INEVITABLE. DAOUDI REPLIED EMPHATICALLY THAT SYRIA'S INTENTIONS WERE THE FORMER. SARG DID NOT WANT TO EMBARRASS U.S. OR FORCE VETO. SARG WANTED TO HAVE PALESTINIAN RIGHTS RECOGNIZED AND HAVE PEACE. IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT PLO ENTER PROCESS, HOWEVER, SO THAT PALESTINIANS COULD ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY TO THEIR OWN POSITION OF NEGOTIATIONS. SYRIAN APPROACH WAS CONSTRUCTIVE ONE AIMED AT ACHIEVING SETTLEMENT AND WHOLE WORLD WOULD SEE IT. SYRIA WISHED TO EXPLORE EVERY POSSIBLE AVENUE, DAOUDI SAID.

3. SAFRAN SAID THIS APPEARED UNDERSTANDABLE GOAL BUT PROBLEM WAS HOW TO ACHIEVE IT IN SC. IF EXISTING RESOLUTIONS 338 AND 242 COULD BE SUPPLEMENTED BY RECOGNITION OF "PALESTINIAN INTERESTS", THEN U.S. MIGHT GO ALONG. DAOUDI REPLIED THAT THIS FORMULATION WOULD NOT BE ENOUGH AS SITUATION REQUIRED AT MINIMUM RECOGNITION OF "PALESTINIAN RIGHTS". SAFRAN SAID FORMULATION "PALESTINIAN INTERESTS" HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED IN VLADIVOSTOCK COMMUNIQUE AND WAS REALLY NOT ALL THAT BAD FROM ARAB SIDE. IT WAS VAGUE ENOUGH TO EMBRACE VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS, WHICH COULD THEN EMERGE IN NEGOTIATIONS. BUT, DAOUDI INTERJECTED, WOULD ISRAEL ACCEPT? SAFRAN SAID THAT WAS NOT IMPORTANT. IMPORTANT THING WAS THAT U.S. WOULD INTERPRET PHRASE IN WAY WHICH WOULD PROMOTE SETTLEMENT.

4. DAOUDI AFTER SOME DELAY THEN ASKED WHAT SAFRAN THOUGHT U.S. RESPONSE WOULD BE IF THIRD PARTY INTRODUCED RESOLUTION MAKING PLO PARTY TO PROCESS AS REPRESENTATIVE OF "PALESTINIAN INTERESTS". SAFRAN REPLIED HE DID NOT KNOW BUT AT VERY LEAST U.S. WOULD INSIST ON BALANCING CLAUSE INDICATING PLO WILLINGNESS

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TO LIVE IN PEACE WITH ALL STATES IN AREA, INCLUDING ISRAEL.

5. SAFRAN SAID DAOUDI GREW INCREASINGLY INTERESTED AS CONVERSATION PROGRESSED AND AT THIS POINT URGED SAFRAN TO SEE FONMIN KHADDAM, PLO REP AND REP OF BAATH PARTY BEFORE HE LEFT DAMASCUS. IMPLICATION WAS THAT DAOUDI THOUGHT IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR SAFRAN

TO PRESENT SAME LINE OF ARGUMENT TO THEM.
SAFRAN SENSED THERE WERE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PRESIDENCY
AND FOREIGN MINISTER ON APPROACH SYRIA SHOULD TAKE.
DAOUDI THEN SAID HE WOULD CALL KHADDAM'S OFFICE TO
SUGGEST APPOINTMENT, BUT SAFRAN WOULD HAVE TO CONTACT
PLO AND BAATH PARTY ON HIS OWN. SAFRAN NOW WAITING
TO HEAR ABOUT APPOINTMENT WITH FONMIN.
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